

AN APACHE LIFE-WAY

754 "These people hate their own children; they hate their close relatives."

[578] But in most instances of alleged sorcery, the motive of the witch is narrowed down to some quarrel or thwarted design:

One man suspects M. of being a witch. His wife used to be good friends with her. She used to be over at M.'s all the time. Then she died, just after those two women had a falling-out of some sort. That's the way they work. You have hot words with a person. Then you die from some little accident. The person is under suspicion after that.

The greed of the sorcerer and the danger of denying him his desires is a recurring theme:

• [511] If you suspect you are witched, you must think over everybody that you have refused anything to or to whom you have not freely given something he admired. Perhaps someone said to you, "What a nice Navaho rug!" But you didn't give it to him. He witched you. That's why Indians don't plan to live nicely and have good things around. They'd only be running into danger from witches.

[584] Rejected marriage suits may stir the malice of witches. "A young woman might die. They would say that a man who had been refused by her before her marriage had done this to her because he couldn't have her himself."

[833] There is no personal misfortune, no public disaster, that may not ultimately be construed as the work of a witch. Impotence is sometimes attributed to sorcery, and witches are accused of interfering with domestic tranquillity:

[555] When I married, I lived near my wife's parents. A year later my wife had a baby and it died. About two months later she began to act as if she wasn't the same person at all. She was mean, and there was trouble all the time. I came away and lived down here, but my mother-in-law liked me and knew that I was trying to do the right thing. My wife had been witched. They took her to a shaman, and he saw what the matter was and cured her. About a month after she was cured I went back to her. She was just like her old self again.

[845] Of difficult childbirth, it was said: "When a woman is having a hard time in labor, if her husband finds out for sure that a witch is responsible, he will go out and kill him."

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535 At the other end of the scale is widespread sickness:

There has been much sickness around here, a lot of pneumonia. So last week my father painted masked dancers to find out what it was from and how it was